

## Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 187140

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:PFOR, CASC, YO, US (SEDMAK, MICHAEL), (DOYCHINOVICH,

VLADIMIR

SUBJ: CASES OF AMERICAN CITIZENS MICHAEL SEDMAK AND

VLADIMIR DOYCHINOVICH.

1. PAGE FIVE OF NEW YORK TIMES FOR JULY 28 CONTAINS AN ARTICLE BY MALCOLM BROWNE ENTITLED, "FIVE AMERICANS HELD IN YUGOSLAV JAILS," TOGETHER WITH TAG-ON UPI STORY DATE-LINED SHEBOYGAN FALLS, WISCONSIN. (WE UNDERSTAND WIRELESS FILE IS CARRYING BOTH ARTICLES.)

2. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF UPI STORY. BEGIN TEXT. SISTER "DISILLUSIONED". SHEBOYGAN FALLS, WIS., JULY 27 (UPI) - AGNES HUNT, THE SISTER OF MICHAEL SEDMAK, A VETERAN OF WORLD WAR TWO SAYS SHE IS "VERY DISILLUSIONED" THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT HAS IGNORED HER PLEAS FOR INFORMATION ABOUT HIM.

"I MUST HAVE WRITTEN SEVERAL DOZEN LETTERS," MRS. HUNT SAID YESTERDAY. SHE SAID SHE HAD RECEIVED AN ANSWER FROM  
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THE CONSULATE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR. " I HAVEN'T

HEARD ANYTHING SINCE THEN," MRS. HUNT ADDED.

MRS. HUNT SAID HER BROTHER, WHILE TRAVELING FROM WEST GERMANY TO VISIT HIS DAUGHTERS AND EX-WIFE IN TRIESTE, HAD APPARENTLY BEFRIENDED A MAN WHO WAS GOING TO YUGOSLAVIA. SHE SAID SHE UNDERSTOOD THEY HAD BEEN ARRESTED, MR. SEDMAK BECAUSE HE WAS IN THE COMPANY OF THE OTHER MAN. END TEXT.

3. FOLLOWING GUIDANCE WAS PREPARED FOR DEPARTMENT'S SPOKESMAN ON JULY 28 IN ANTICIPATION OF QUESTIONS CONCERNING MRS. HUNT'S STATEMENTS REPORTED IN UPI STORY: QUESTION: MICHAEL SEDMAK'S SISTER, AGNES HUNT, HAS CHARGED THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS NOT ACKNOWLEDGED HER PLEAS FOR INFORMATION ABOUT SEDMAK. SHE ALSO SAYS THAT SHE HAS NOT RECEIVED AN ANSWER TO HER LETTERS SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR. IS THIS CORRECT? ANSWER: NO, IT IS NOT. THE LAST LETTER WE RECEIVED FROM MRS. HUNT WAS IN FEBRUARY AND THAT LETTER HAS BEEN ANSWERED WITH ALL THE INFORMATION CONCERNING HER BROTHER AVAILABLE TO US. WE ARE CONTACTING OUR EMBASSY IN BELGRADE AND OUR CONSULATE IN ZAGREB TO ASCERTAIN IF THEY HAVE RECEIVED ANY ADDITIONAL LETTERS FROM HER.

4. DEPARTMENT WOULD APPRECIATE KNOWING WHETHER EMBASSY OR CONSULATE HAS RECEIVED FURTHER COMMUNICATIONS FROM MRS. HUNT, OR FROM OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS SUBSEQUENT TO LETTERS EMBASSY SENT IN MAY, AS DESCRIBED IN PARA 3 OF BELGRADE 3015. ALSO, PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR MOST RECENT INFORMATION ON HEALTH AND WELFARE OF SEDMAK. ALSO, HAVE YUGOSLAV AUTHORITIES RESPONDED TO APPROACH TO CROATIAN AUTHORITIES REPORTED IN ZAGREB 466? WHAT ARE THE PROSPECTS NOW FOR PAROLE IN HIS CASE? (ALTHOUGH THERE WERE NO QUESTIONS AT TODAY'S NOON PRESS BRIEFING ON SEDMAK, DEPARTMENT DID RECEIVE INQUIRY FROM SENATOR PROXMIRE'S OFFICE WHICH HAD BEEN CONTACTED BY MRS. HUNT AND ANOTHER SISTER OF SEDMAK'S AS RESULT OF RECENT PRESS REPORTS. THEY INDICATED PARTICULAR CONCERN RE SEDMAK'S HEALTH IN LIGHT OF TOTH'S STATEMENTS REPORTED IN PRESS HERE THAT HIS HEALTH IS FAILING AND THAT "HE MAY NOT COME OUT ALIVE". CONFIDENTIAL

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WE RESPONDED ON BASIS OF INFORMATION CURRENTLY AVAILABLE TO US, INDICATING THAT ALTHOUGH THERE APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT HIS HEALTH IN PAST, OUR CONSULAR OFFICER ON HIS VISIT IN APRIL NOTED THAT SEDMAK'S HEALTH HAD IMPROVED CONSIDERABLY.)

5. MALCOLM BROWNE ARTICLE DESCRIBED IN PARA ONE ABOVE REPORTS, INTER ALIA, ON CASE OF VLADIMIR DOYCHINOVICH,

STATING QUOTE THE CONSULATE SAID A NUMBER OF EFFORTS ON MR. DOYCHINOVICH'S BEHALF HAD BEEN MADE BY WASHINGTON,

PARTICULARLY IN THE PERIOD AFTER HIS ARREST. BUT OFFICIALS ACKNOWLEDGED THAT HE HAD BEEN MORE OR LESS FORGOTTEN. UNQUOTE. REFERRING TO THIS ARTICLE, DEPARTMENT HAS ASSURED CONGRESSMAN ROSTENKOWSKI'S OFFICE (IN WHOSE DISTRICT RESIDE TWO OF DOYCHINOVICH'S MARRIED DAUGHTERS) THAT USG HAS NOT FORGOTTEN MR. DOYCHINOVICH AND THAT CONTACT WITH HIM HAS BEEN MAINTAINED THROUGH HIS ATTORNEY.

6. LAST INFORMATION DEPARTMENT HAS ON STATUS OF DOYCHINOVICH CASE IS CONTAINED IN EMBASSY'S QUOTE REPORT ON NUMBER OF AMERICAN CITIZENS UNDER DETENTION AS OF MAY 15, 1976 UNQUOTE WHICH STATES THAT FURTHER APPEAL STILL PENDING. DEPARTMENT WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING REPORT OF MOST RECENT INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO EMBASSY CONCERNING LEGAL STATUS OF HIS CASE AND ALSO REGARDING HIS HEALTH AND GENERAL WELFARE.

7. IN ORDER TO MAKE CERTAIN OUR FILES ARE UP-TO-DATE ON OTHER AMERICAN CITIZENS CURRENTLY IN YUGOSLAV JAILS, WE WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE ANY NEW INFORMATION ON CASES OF PETAR BASIC, MICHAEL BORISOFF, AND BOB PETRICH. LATEST INFORMATION WE HAVE ON THESE IS CONTAINED IN EMBASSY'S REPORT CITED IN PARAGRAPH SIX ABOVE.

8. YOU SHOULD NOTE THAT CARE SHOULD BE EXERCISED IN COMMENTING PUBLICLY ON THESE CASES. OUR LAWYERS TELL US THAT THE PRIVACY ACT IMPOSES CONSTRAINTS ON THE DEPARTMENT REVEALING PERSONAL INFORMATION NOT ALREADY IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN WITHOUT THE WRITTEN CONSENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL. OBVIOUSLY THIS IS DIFFICULT TO GET IF WE DON'T HAVE DIRECT CONFIDENTIAL

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ACCESS TO THE INDIVIDUAL BUT THERE HAVE BEEN CASES IN OTHER COUNTRIES WHERE THE PERSON INVOLVED HAS REFUSED TO GIVE SUCH CONSENT. KISSINGER

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